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The Research of the Relationship between Taoist Thought and Management

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ABSTRACT

There is not much literature on this topic, but what can be found is of very high quality. Many modern enterprises use the management model proposed by western management, but Chinese enterprises should focus on the national conditions to find a management mode that conforms to the characteristics of Chinese enterprises. Taoist management thought is very suitable for Chinese enterprises. This paper adopts literature research method to discuss the content around the main thought and the use of Taoist thought in management from two perspectives. Based on the literature I have searched, I think there are two drawbacks. First, there is a lack of relevant research in other subjects. Taoist thought should be studied together with economics, financial management and other subjects to enrich their views. Second, there is a lack of practical examples. If there are no practical examples to prove the correctness and feasibility of the point of view, no matter how novel the point is, it is just an empty talk. China's economic strength is becoming stronger and stronger, and its international status is becoming higher and higher. Chinese enterprises should not only focus on foreign market changes, but also grasp the domestic market form and status quo, so as to carry out better enterprise management and create an enterprise with Chinese characteristics.

Keywords: Taoism, Taoist management though, Management, Modern enterprises.

1. INTRODUCTION

Taoism is widely used in people's lives, such as human resource management, administrative management, organization management and so on. The practice of Taoism in different fields tells us that different management though be adopted and applied in enterprises should through many practices. Only have a large number of theoretical accumulations without the proof of practice, Taoist though is hard to be recognized by enterprises and organizations in today. It has the connection of theory and practice is truly integrated and abundant.

From the perspective of management, we can find many modern thoughts, which can be called the "Less work, high efficiency" management method [1]. The management method of Taoism will integrate "high efficiency" and the management of the company, and earnestly help companies complete corporate activities in an orderly manner. Taoist thought has a history of 1800 years, many people think it is outdated, but it is not true, many scholars in China and abroad are studying it, it is also used by many entrepreneurs in

enterprises, even more influential than western management. With the need of economic globalization and market competition, many management scholars turn their attention from the western management mode to the Chinese Taoism management method [2]. Taoist management thought seems to have no specific and strict management system, but according to the thoughts of "The connection of people and nature." "The way is to obey the rules of nature." "Non-intervention" and so on proposed by Taoism, the connect of Taoist management thought is consistent with the five functions of management proposed by western management scientists (planning, organization, command, coordination and control) [3]. Therefore, it is feasible for Taoist thought to be applied to Chinese and foreign enterprises. Both thoughts also believe that management can be effective only by the inner persistence of "people". "Management" plays a role in restraining human desires and optimizing resource allocation, but it is far from enough to achieve the goal by merely relying on the power of management. It is really feasible to play a role in the deep heart of human beings. "Morality" can be achieved, and Taoism thought can be achieved [4]. According to CNKI's literature on



the relationship between Taoism and management, the number of Chinese scholars studying the relationship between Taoism and management is relatively small, and there are not many core journals published on CNKI. However, the quantity is not the same as the quality of the selected topic literature, and future generations of researchers should pay more attention to the viewpoints of the literature. Because the key point of previous papers is often the novel though that they written in their papers and the different fields that they discovered. The literature on the relationship between Taoism and economics is even scarcer, but the literature on the relationship between Taoism and human resource management, public management, and administration is still relatively large. This paper mainly studies the relationship between Taoism and management. It will also study the relationship between Taoism and other fields such as "human resource management" and "public administration". This paper divides the main body into the content research of Taoist thought and the influence of Taoist thought on modern enterprises. The definition, characteristics, functions and influences of Taoism in management are explained and studied in detail. In recent years, as China's economic strength has gradually strengthened and its international status has gradually improved, more and more enterprises have realized that their management methods should conform to China's market environment and trend of though. Entrepreneurs began to learn from Taoist management though to manage employees, the effective management method does not depend on the length of time of management though but in whether they are suitable for enterprises.

2. THE OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN RESEARCH CONTENT OF TAOISM

2.1. The Connection Of People And Nature

The number of literature on "The connection of people and nature." in Taoism is small, and the number of core journal articles on the site is also relatively small. The number of papers do not affect the quality of the papers.

The relevant literature is divided into three aspects to define. The first aspect is a point what should be noticed in the production process of enterprises. Scholar Yu Zhengxi thinks that enterprises should pay attention to the protection of ecological environment in the process of production and management, and understand that the environment and the survival of enterprises are inseparable [5]. I think through this though enterprises can better integrate with the contemporary" green" concept and conform to the trend of environment protection. Such measures can show whether the enterprises really understand he definition of "The connection of people and nature." The second aspect is

the right mindset that enterprises should have. A right mindset can determine the future of the enterprises, which want to get a longer life. Scholar Zhou Xinfang discovers that enterprises should treat nature sincerely. Although they have mastered the powerful technology to conquer nature and obtained great wealth, they should not seek profits at the cost of destroying nature. Instead, they should protect the ecological environment and livein harmony with nature [6]. As people gradually realize the importance of protecting the environment, enterprises should also change their mindset and point, and the idea of "only care about profit" should be gradually abandoned. The last point is: enterprises should not be too utilitarian and should diversify. Enterprises should not only care about the benefits brought by production, but also care about whether the market production activities of enterprises can live in harmony with nature. Scholar Miao Zehua, Bianna and Yang chenzi's opinion in the paper is that "The connection of people and nature" is a theory reflecting the relationship between man and nature, which is the relationship between enterprises and ecological environment when applied to management. The production and operation behavior of enterprises should not only consider the interests, but also consider the balance between the interests and the ecological environment [7]. As more and more people start businesses, there are also more and more emerging enterprises. Large enterprises do not want to be occupied by new market shares, they need to understand the characteristics of new industries and the meaning of new industries. Then deeply study these characteristics and meanings, flexibly combine these characteristics and meanings into their own enterprises, implement multi-level development, and gradually build diversified enterprises. This is practise that conform to the definition of "The connection of people and nature.".

Many papers on "the connection between man and nature" agree in this regard. They all believe that people and nature should respect each other, and enterprises should comply with the concept of protecting the ecological environment when organizing production activities. Enterprises can survive, thrive and take their place in the long stream of history.

2.2. The Way Is To Obey The Rules Of Nature

The topic of "The way is to obey the rules of nature." is not very popular, there is very little research on this topic. However, the quality of this topic paper is very high-level. Through this paper, we can discover more valuable and unique points to enrich our thought.

The literature on the topic of "The way is to obey the rules of nature." is analyzed from two aspects of "essence" and "practice". Lv Xichen and Huang Xiaoyun think the essence of Taoism is "nature", which means to follow the trend. When applied to



management, it means that managers take measures according to objective situations rather than subjective decisions [8]. Enterprises and organizations should according to the essence of "The way is to obey the rules of nature." to obey marketing trend. When the step of enterprises and organizations in line with marketing, they will have more possibilities to profit. Scholar Luo Laigeng wrote in his paper: according to the objective situation, we should discover and explore the essence of market, management, economy, so that we can grasp the core of enterprise management [9]. The market measures that let enterprises become thriving are based an accurate understanding of objective circumstances.

The common view of the two scholars is that no matter what aspect of enterprise want to development (like market, management, economy, etc.), they should make judgment and decision according to objective situation."

2.3. Non-intervention

There is a huge literature on "Non-intervention". From this literature we can get many viewpoints and diverse perspectives. Many core journals and professors' papers in China have covered this topic. In spite of they may have approached the thought from a different field. The content of management can be found in those literature.

This literature divided into three perspectives to define "Non-intervention". Such as Effect, Method and Meaning. From the first perspective, the definition of "Non-intervention" means to do not intervene employee's behavior. Lv Xichen and Huang Xiaoyun think: If we do not take actions to intervene employee, they tend to get better results. Conversely, too much discipline is easy for employee to have rebellious psychology [10]. Yang Changhua and Liu Yaozhong also hold this point. In management, "Non-interference and governance" is more a means to achieve the purpose of "good management of employees", rather than just a way of inaction [11]. And scholars Ge Rongjin and Li Weibo also think this point is true. They written in their paper: In the market competition, the idea of "Nonintervention" allows entrepreneurs to occupy a place in the market, change strategies at the right time, and decide whether to "fight" or "not to fight" according to the market situation [12]. Enterprises can directly choose what kind of management results they want through the research on management effects provided by scholars. The second perspective is different methods "Non-intervention". can truly define management can make employees more efficient. Wang Runsheng says the same words in paper. "Nonintervention" refers to scientific behavior, which should conform to "nature" and is equivalent to the enterprise environment and enterprise culture in management. This idea attaches great importance to the management of human resources, and scientific methods can make employees give full play to their value. It also hopes that employees can "manage themselves". This kind of management will give employees a sense of autonomy, which is conducive to cohesion [13]. In the same way, Zhang Wei and Liu Xiaoli found that "Nonintervention" requires the enterprise to grasp the "degree", to use the staff within the flexible range, and cannot completely ignore the staff this management mode is irresponsible [14]. The method of selfmanagement can effectively increase the work efficiency of employees. And it doesn't cost too much time and money. The last point is that the meaning makes a profound statement about the definition of "Non-intervention". Fan Tingwei and Zhu Yongxin put a new understanding in this perspective. There are three aspects of management significance of "Nonintervention": reducing the psychological resistance of being managed, reducing conflicts, giving play to the role of organizational structure and avoiding the subjective interference of managers [15]. To carry out research from the meaning of "Non-intervention", enterprises can more intuitively understand why they should choose the idea of "Non-intervention" to manage employees.

Although so many scholars discuss the definition of "Non-intervention" from different perspectives, they all agree with this idea in essence. They all believe that enterprises will develop better and their management activities will become more organized by using this idea thought.

3. THE OVERVIEW OF THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN ENTERPRISES ON TAOISM

3.1. The Effects Of Management

There are a large number of literatures in this field and the quality is very high. Three literatures from different perspectives are selected for analysis.

The first perspectives is about the key point of the effects of management. The key point in the management is "people", we should give play to the subjective initiative of "people". The status of "people" should be higher than managers. Only by giving play to people's subjective initiative can the management activities of enterprises be carried out in an orderly manner [16]. This is the ideas of Guo Honggang and Wang Chengxiang. Only when managers and enterprises pay attention to employees, after that employee will truly willing to complete the tasks given by their superiors, so as to reflect the effect of management. Therefore, the quality of management effect is closely related to "people". A modern enterprise cannot ignore the importance of employees. The second aspect is the behavior of managers



mentioned in Zhang Xiaofen's literature. "Nonintervention" has high requirements on the leaders of enterprises. Leaders should help employees with their own ability and never shirk, and they will not seek fame and wealth to take the successful results as their own when working for the enterprise [17]. If a manager damages or despoil the work achievements of his employees in order to enhance his reputation, it is worth judging. Gradually, his employees will leave their jobs, which will greatly increase the turnover rate of the enterprise. Therefore, we should avoid such behavior to reduce the loss caused by employee turnover and avoid unethical behavior of managers to affect the corporate image. The last point is from Song Zhe's paper. Taoism has two effects on the management effect of employees in modern enterprises: reducing the psychological resistance of employees to be managed and reducing conflicts [18]. This point revolves around the purpose of "purpose". If a management though can make the people being managed pleasure to do the work without conflict with others in the process. Then this idea should be deeply studied by managers and entrepreneurs. This though can be combined with the corporate image to create a new management model.

Although the entry points of the three scholars are different, they all start to write paper from "employees" in essence, and they will not ignore the importance and initiative of employees. Because any enterprise or organization is composed of many employees, a large enterprise or organization cannot lack a solid foundation. As the Old Chinese saying goes, "A dam of a thousand miles is broken by a nest of ants", any seemingly insignificant employee can make a big impact.

3.2. The Leaders Of Enterprises

The number of literature on the influence of Taoist management thoughts on enterprise leaders is very large, and the quality of the literature is also very high.

The literature is roughly divided into two perspectives to think and study. The first perspective is managers. Fu Jingyi and Fu Changyi think: Taoism believes that the leadership model of the highest-level leader should make employees feel that the leader does not exist, so that employees will not have the pressure from their superiors. Because of the influence of the idea of "Non-intervention", leaders make scientific judgment and correct guidance, they will not put pressure on employees, and let employees develop themselves [19]. There are no clear standards for employees but let employees do work absolutely follow the rules, which is the highest management method of modern enterprise leaders. The thought of Fu Jingyi and Fu Changyi coincides with the thought of Zhang Wei and Lu Xiaoli. They all think managers should attach importance of the employees. The biggest revelation for leaders is that they should learn to give more opportunities to employees and delegate some power to subordinates within a reasonable range, because no matter how powerful a leader is, he or she cannot handle everything well [20]. Managers cannot monopolize power and give other employees no chance to show their abilities. Only when both employees and managers give full play to their abilities can enterprises achieve greater success. In the same way, LI Xiaochun also think managers should not take action to intervene employees. The "Non-intervention" management model is demanding. For managers, to achieve a deep understanding of the core of management, have a broad outlook and so on [21]. The manager's strategic layout can determine the career route of employees and the development direction of the enterprise, and even can determine the survival of an enterprise. Scholar Cao Xiaoxing written in paper that Taoism also has a profound influence on human resource management in modern enterprises. The best leaders do not give orders easily, encourage employees more, blame them less and so on. It is easy to deal with these things, and it is easy to succeed [22]. Employees' working mood, working environment and working pleasure can all affect their efficiency. Therefore, leaders should encourage employees to put forward ideas rather than discourage their enthusiasm. The second perspective is about the objective circumstances. Managers should not impose their own ideas on employees, nor should they judge the standards of management activities according to their own standards. Objective situations should be considered as the primary object [23]. This is the point of Yang Changhua and Liu Yaozhong. Leaders should make changes according to the objective circumstances before making any decisions. They cannot change easily without fully grasping the situation.

These two types of research are conducted from the perspective of managers and objective circumstances. Although the starting point is different, their ultimate purpose is to avoid excessive intervention in the thoughts and behaviors of employees, to give them more development space and achieve better development for the enterprise.

3.3. The Research of Management Mode And Thoughts Of Judgement

There are a large number of literatures in the research of management mode and thoughts of judgement, and every one of them is very instructive.

According to the literature, management mode and thoughts of judgement are divided into three perspectives. The first perspective is the connection of Taoist management though with management mode and thoughts of judgement. The decision-making management of enterprises also needs the idea of "Non-intervention", because only by following objective



conditions and current situation, enterprises can make useful decision-making results that are not blind [24]. This is the scholar Zhang Xiaofen's thought. The Taoist idea of "Non-intervention" can lead to a better future for modern enterprises management mode and thoughts of judgement.

The second perspective is about the connection of objective conditions with management mode and thoughts of judgement. In the paper of Zhang Wei and Lu Xiaoli, there are certain rules in the management activities of an enterprise, which should be mastered and used flexibly by the leader without excessive intervention. Employees in this mode can better achieve the goals of the enterprise. The management mode of the most intelligent manager is deeply rooted in people's hearts. It seems that no leader is managing employees, but in fact all employees know the management method of the manager in their hearts [25]. Only when the management mode is combined with the objective conditions can the enterprise achieve its goals more efficiently and quickly. The last perspective is the connection of employees with management mode and thoughts of judgement. The leader achieves the "Nonintervention" management mode, arranges work according to the characteristics of different employees, gives authority, and gives employees the opportunity to show their abilities. In this model, the leader appears to be absent from the activities, but in fact his work is carried out in an orderly manner [26]. That's what Yang Changhua and Liu Yaozhong wrote in the paper. An old Chinese saying goes, "Teach students according to their aptitude. "If the management mode of modern enterprises can fit the characteristics of different employees, it will be very easy for enterprises to manage employees, and there will be no contradiction. Employees who work for a long time are likely to feel tired, which will lead to decreased performance and lower efficiency. If the management mode of the enterprise is set according to the characteristics of employees, employees will feel fresh and more willing to work for the enterprise.

To sum up, the existence of the enterprises' management mode and thoughts of judgement is to make the enterprise better and more long-term development, and use different management modes to obtain more benefits. The three papers focus on different perspectives ("management thought", "objective condition" and "employee characteristics"), but their research purposes are all centered on enterprises, and only the management mode and thoughts of judgement that let enterprises to flourish are truly worthy of study.

3.4. Corporate Culture

The influence of management thoughts on corporate culture is very far-reaching, although the number of

papers related to the topic is not much, but the quality of papers related to this topic is very high.

"Management thought" and "corporate culture" are mutually influenced and determined by each other. Yu Zhengxi's paper, Liu Shuai and Wang Yulian's papers just study the relationship between "management thought" and "corporate culture" from two different directions. Yu Zhengxi's though is that "Management thought" determine "corporate culture". Under the influence of "The connection of people and nature", enterprises will pay more attention to the needs of employees and fully realize the importance of employees' ideas. Under such high-quality enterprise management, the enterprise will easily have the corporate culture characteristics of "unity" "loyalty"[27]. In Yu Zhengxi's opinion, enterprises should establish their own management though first, later they can develop and have their corporate culture. And if enterprises want high-quality management though they should know the need of employees. Because employees are the foundation of a company's long-term development. Taoist management thought "The connection of people and nature" is very conducive to the formation of enterprise culture. However, Liu Shuai and Wang Yulian's thought is that "corporate culture" determine "Management thought". The foundation of management is also the construction of enterprise culture. The management method should be adapted to the culture of the enterprise. Taoism is consistent with this thought [28]. If "corporate culture" can interact with management methods and though, it must be positive and can motivate employees. Many theories of Taoist management thought are very positive and encouraging, such as "The connection of people and nature", "The way is to obey the rules of nature." and "Non-intervention". So, modern enterprises more use of Taoist management ideas, is really able to help them.

The authors of these two papers focus on two different perspectives, but they both start from the research on the better development of the enterprise. Both "management thought" and "enterprise culture" can help modern enterprises better manage employees, better cultivate employees and better survive. At the same time, an enterprise without clear management ideas and corporate culture is unlikely to survive in the market for a long time.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. Lack Of Evidence from Other Subjects

These papers lack explanations of relevant knowledge of other subjects. Although the topic is about "Management", we can also use some theories of other subjects to prove whether "Taoist management thought" is suitable for management or more suitable for other subjects. The first is "Human resource management".



"Human resource management" is a subject that all enterprises will be involved in, and the theoretical knowledge of this subject is seldom mentioned. The second is "Production management", "Production management" is a subject that has a lot of contact with some production enterprises. This should also be studied. The third is "Financial Management", "Financial Management" will involve the financial department, which is one of the most important departments of an enterprise, and the data of the financial department cannot be wrong. This subject is closely related to modern enterprises, but there is no special study by scholars. The important role of Taoist thought in economics can also be studied. Some financial companies can invest money according to the Taoist thought of "The connection of people and nature ". For example, in the face of the "financial crisis", enterprises can minimize losses through the situation. This idea also applies to stock companies, because only by paying attention to current events can we grasp the stock market and decide whether to "buy" or "sell" according to the reality. In addition to its economic impact on commercial enterprises, Taoism also has an economic impact on political organizations. For example, if the industrial and commercial bureau learns the Taoist thought of "The way is to obey the nature.", then the industrial and commercial bureau will deal with some economic affairs more objectively and fairly, and will greatly reduce the behavior of abusing power for personal gain and tax evasion..

4.2. Lack Of Practical Examples

The content of many papers is too theoretical, without practical examples to prove the point, and without data to show whether there are many enterprises using "Taoist management thought".

Here are some suggestions for the lack of evidence from other subjects. The subject of "Human Resource Management" can be mentioned. Entrepreneurs can make accurate personnel transfers according to the personalities and work styles of managers and employees. Extroverts can go to sales and marketing departments, and careful people to finance department and so on. "Production management" this professional knowledge can give some enlightenment to the production enterprise. For example, according to the Taoist theory of "The way is to obey the rules of nature.", the manufacturer can produce products according to the terrain, season, history and culture and dietary habits of the buyer's region. In this way, the products will not be sold in large quantities and some economic losses can be saved. Scholars should combine the Taoist theory of "The way is to obey the rules of nature." to conduct professional research on financial management. They can suggest enterprises to assign work to employees in the financial department according to their personality characteristics. Important work needs to be completed by more careful people, because the amount of money in an enterprise is very important.

There are suggestions for the lack of practical examples. We can collect which enterprises have used this thought and which enterprises gave up. Some data can more intuitively reflect whether a though is understood by the public.

Summarizing these literature, Li Yanzhong's points are quite correct. Although Lao Zi lived in the distant ancient times, his dialectical view brought a lot of enlightenment to managers, but also to many enterprises to guide the right way, so that enterprises and managers through the study of famous quotes to find the real way to survive. For example, enterprises should learn to develop and innovate, and managers should learn to grasp the rules of management

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